



U.S. Department of Justice

**Stephen J. Murphy
United States Attorney
Eastern District of Michigan**

*Suite 2001
211 West Fort Street
Detroit, Michigan 48226-3277
Fax: (313) 226-3561*

For Immediate Release:

Contact: Gina Balaya (313) 226-9758
Greg Palmore - ICE (313) 226-0500

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EVENT: Sentencing

Defendant: Shahin Judeh et al

**CHICAGO MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO IMPORTING MILLIONS
OF PSEODOEPHEDRINE PILLS IN "CRYSTAL METH" CONSPIRACY**

A 36-year-old Chicago resident extradited from Brazil in 2005 pleaded guilty to conspiring to distribute and import into the United States millions of tablets of pseudoephedrine, through the metropolitan Detroit area, knowing that those pills would be used to manufacture "crystal meth," a controlled substance, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Brian Moskowitz, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Detroit.

Pleading guilty before U.S. District Judge Gerald E. Rosen was Shahin Judeh.

The information presented to the court at the time of the plea revealed that between November 2002 and May 2003, Shahin Judeh, Ali Salem and several co-conspirators paid hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash to co-conspirators in Montreal, Canada to acquire over ten million pills of pseudoephedrine, and engaged in significant efforts to smuggle the pills

into the United States across the Windsor-Detroit border and then transport them to western locations in the United States for use in the manufacture of methamphetamine. The plans of the conspiracy were revealed and thwarted through the use of undercover ICE agents posing as corrupt truck drivers, and through the cooperative investigative efforts of ICE, the Drug Enforcement Administration and Canadian Law Enforcement Authorities.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "The guilty plea is an example of how international cooperation can thwart high volume purveyors of the precursor drugs used to make 'crystal meth.' I commend the excellent work of the ICE, DEA and our Canadian partners."

Special Agent in Charge Brian Moskowitz said, "The conviction of Judeh serves a crippling blow to an organization that conspired to smuggle 10 million tablets of pseudoephedrine into the United States. When manufactured into methamphetamine, this pseudoephedrine represented more than 1,840 kilograms of methamphetamine with an estimated street value in excess of \$36,000,000.00." "The seizure of 10 million tablets of pseudoephedrine will have a dramatic impact on the availability of methamphetamine on the streets of our cities."

Under the terms of his plea agreement, Judeh faces a guideline sentencing range of 235 to 240 months in prison. His sentencing date has been scheduled for December 17, 2007. Co-Defendants Ali Salem, Mohammad Awad and Enrique Sanchez (also known as Enrique Barajas) each pleaded guilty to identical charges earlier this year and are all awaiting sentencing. Sanchez was also extradited from abroad (Canada) for prosecution on these charges.

The investigation of this case was conducted by agents of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Drug Enforcement Administration, with the assistance of Canadian Law Enforcement Authorities. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Carl Gilmer-Hill and Special Assistant United States Attorney Joe Allen.